

# The Nebraska Panhandle Panhandle Juvenile Services Comprehensive Plan

*(As required by the State Juvenile Services Act, LB640 and LB 193)*

## 2009-2011

This plan represents the counties of the Panhandle of Nebraska: Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan and Sioux. The plan covers January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2011.

The plan was written by Mary Wernke, Panhandle Public Health District, P.O. Box 337, 808 Box Butte Avenue, Hemingford, NE 69348, phone 308.487.3600, fax 308.487.3682. the staff of Panhandle Public Health District, with words provided by the Juvenile Justice planning committee in meetings throughout the Panhandle, beginning with a Call to Action Summit in November 2008.

The chair of the community team is Kim Engel, director of PPHD who is available at the address listed above. The individual county board chairmen are listed below:

<b>County</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Banner	Bob Gifford	HC 50 Harrisburg, NE 69345	308.436.5946	<a href="mailto:rgifford@bbcwb.net">rgifford@bbcwb.net</a>
Box Butte	Casper Brixius	1839 Niobrara Alliance, NE 69301	308.762.3642	<a href="mailto:cap-jan@charter.net">cap-jan@charter.net</a>
Cheyenne	Harold Winkelman	6018 Road 93 Dalton, NE 69131	308.377.2221	<a href="mailto:winkel@daltontel.net">winkel@daltontel.net</a>
Dawes	Don Blausey, Sr.	1116 E 3 <sup>rd</sup> St Chadron, NE 69337	308.432.5110	<a href="mailto:dblausey@hotmail.com">dblausey@hotmail.com</a>
Deuel	Clint Bailey	2410 Road 195 Big Springs, NE 69122	308.889-3650	<a href="mailto:dmarieb@wildblue.net">dmarieb@wildblue.net</a>
Garden	Terry McCord	210 East Ave H Oshkosh, NE 69154	308.772.4494	<a href="mailto:twibmccord@earthlink.net">twibmccord@earthlink.net</a>
Kimball	Rick Soper	PO Box 356 Kimball, NE 69145	308.235.4595	<a href="mailto:soperproduction@earthlink.net">soperproduction@earthlink.net</a>
Morrill	Steve Erdman	HC 86, Box 180 Bayard, NE 69334	308.262.1760	<a href="mailto:scerdman@telecomwest.net">scerdman@telecomwest.net</a>
Scotts Bluff	Mark Masterton	2410 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave Scottsbluff, NE 69361	308.698.5205	<a href="mailto:mastertonsare@scottsbuff.net">mastertonsare@scottsbuff.net</a>
Sheridan	Jack Anderson	POB 5 Lakeside, NE 69351	308.762.1784	<a href="mailto:webmaster@nebrsites.com">webmaster@nebrsites.com</a>
Sioux	Keith Zimmerman	50 Bodarc Rd Harrison, NE 69346	308.668.2238	not available

## ***The Community Team***

The community team is a working group of the Panhandle Prevention Coalition. The PPC was formed five years ago as part of the State Incentive Cooperative Agreement process in Nebraska to work on prevention projects, including prevention of underage drinking. The working group meets on an as-needed basis and has been meeting since November on this one project. The larger group has been meeting monthly since October 2004 to work on a variety of juvenile service issues.

The working group to develop this plan was re-formed following a Call to Action Summit in Gering in November 2008. This is the same group that helped develop the summit in cooperation with the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation and the partners in that statewide project, which include the Nebraska Crime Commission.

Often, the working group meets by teleconference to discuss planning topics, as the geography, economy and time considerations of the working members do not allow travel across our vast region on a frequent basis for issues that can be managed on the telephone or by televideo conferencing. Members of the working group are listed below:

Team member	Title	Address	Phone	Email
Kim Engel	Panhandle Public Health District Director	P.O. Box 337 808 Box Butte Hemingford, NE 69348	308.487.3600	<a href="mailto:kengel@pphd.org">kengel@pphd.org</a>
Sandy Roes	Western Community Health Resources Director	848 Morehead Chadron, NE 69337	308.432.2747, X 104	<a href="mailto:director@wchr.net">director@wchr.net</a>
Jann Lawler	Cheyenne County Community Organizer/Kids Plus Director	P.O. Box 296 Sidney, NE 69162	308.254.7397	<a href="mailto:jann.lawler@yahoo.com">jann.lawler@yahoo.com</a>
Krista Shaul	Cheyenne County Deputy County Attorney	P.O. Box 217 920 Jackson Sidney, NE 69162	308.254.6060	<a href="mailto:cheyennedca2@charterinternet.com">cheyennedca2@charterinternet.com</a>
Michelle Roberts	Sheridan County Community Organizer/Family Rescue Services Client Advocate/ WCHR Juvenile Justice Tracker		308.282-0126	<a href="mailto:frsgordon@yahoo.com">frsgordon@yahoo.com</a>
Janelle Hansen	Box Butte County Community Organizer/PPHD Health Educator	P.O. Box 337 808 Box Butte Hemingford, NE 69348	308.487.3600	<a href="mailto:hansenj@pphd.org">hansenj@pphd.org</a>

Marie Parker	Banner County Community Organizer/Banner County School Nurse	Banner County Schools P.O. Box 5 Harrisburg, NE 69345	308.436.5262	<a href="mailto:camprock.rp@juno.com">camprock.rp@juno.com</a>
Susan Martinez	Mediator at Center for Conflict Resolution	P.O. Box 427 1524 Broadway Scottsbluff, NE 69361	308.635.2002	<a href="mailto:smartinez@conflictresolutioncenter.com">smartinez@conflictresolutioncenter.com</a>
Mary Wernke	Training Academy, Communications and Grants Development Coordinator for PPHD	P.O. Box 337 808 Box Butte Hemingford, NE 69348	308.487.3600	<a href="mailto:mwernke@pphd.org">mwernke@pphd.org</a>
Rose Brassfield	Garden County Community Organizer/Volunteers of America	P.O. Box 128 Lewellen, NE 69127	308.778.5548	<a href="mailto:rabrassfield@yahoo.com">rabrassfield@yahoo.com</a>
Stacey Ferguson	Scotts Bluff County Community Organizer			<a href="mailto:paulstacyf@earthlink.net">paulstacyf@earthlink.net</a>
Judy Soper	Deuel County Community Organizer	20725 Road 4 Big Springs, NE 69122	308.889.3444	<a href="mailto:jsoper@atcjet.net">jsoper@atcjet.net</a>
Faith Mills	Prevention Coordinator Region 1 Behavioral Health	1517 Broadway Suite 124 Scottsbluff, NE 69361	308.632.3044	<a href="mailto:faith_mills@allophone.com">faith_mills@allophone.com</a>
Nancy Stander	Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator for Region 1 Behavioral Health			<a href="mailto:nancy_stander@allophone.com">nancy_stander@allophone.com</a>
Barbara Jolliffe	Panhandle Substance Abuse Council			<a href="mailto:barb_jolliffe@allophone.com">barb_jolliffe@allophone.com</a>

# ***Juvenile Justice System Analysis tool***

## *Summary of recommendations*

1. Because of the number of alcohol related offenses in this area are high, it would be beneficial to provide an alcohol education class or victim impact component to the informal diversion program. In addition, prevention (of underage drinking) is a key component of the juvenile justice system in the Panhandle. As a measure of prevention, more than one county in the region uses an after-school program as an effective method of providing alternate activities for youth, who might otherwise become involved in delinquent behavior, such as underage drinking or vandalism. The after-school programs also provide a safe place for children to be in the hours after school and other times when school is not in session, but when parents are unable to be home with the children. After-school programs also provide an additional link between the juvenile and his community, school and adopted family of caring individuals. After-school programs provide academic assistance, substance abuse prevention education and other programs of benefit to the youngsters enrolled in such programs as Century 21 Community Learning Centers, Boys & Girls Clubs and local youth centers.
2. Due to the effectiveness of School Resource Officers, the continuance of this position would be supported. This position is important not only for community relations, but also for the issues of truancy and criminal behavior at the schools.
3. Because of the number of cases being handled by the part-time County attorneys in many of our counties, it could be beneficial to have a rotating county attorney position between adjoining county attorneys in this area.
4. Due to the loss of the contracted beds at the shelter bed facility, researching other options for shelter and staff secure short term beds is needed. For example, would it be plausible to collaborate with local nursing home facilities for a 1-2 bedroom space for overnight nonsecure probation screened juveniles?
5. The county attorney has numerous cases every year that are given an informal diversion option for certain cases i.e. Minor in Possession. However due to the case load of the part-time county attorney, it is difficult to adequately supervise these cases. One possible solution would be to create a multi-county diversion program. Another option would be to have an outside contracted agency do the supervision of these informal diversion clients which will allow the county attorney more time for his court responsibilities.
6. HHS/OJS needs to play a more integral part of the community planning process and other coalitions in this area. They are a valuable resource that is being underutilized.
7. The DMC (Disproportionate Minority Contact) issue in this community specifically with the Native American and Hispanic populations is one that needs to be addressed. The community needs to work with the DMC coordinator to work on training and cultural based issues.
8. Truancy remains such an accurate predictor of future delinquency. Between July and December 2002, the YLS/CMI (Youth Level of Services/Case Management Inventory) assessment tool was administered to approximately 1100 Nebraska youth. The results of this tool indicated that truancy was the 7<sup>th</sup> ranked risk factor of juvenile delinquency. The use of a standardized assessment instrument could benefit school administrators and juvenile justice professionals with the ability to evaluate a juvenile's situation before it got to the point of justice intervention.

## ***Community Socioeconomics***

The eleven counties of the Panhandle cover 14,600 square miles known as the Western Service Area. The region is bordered by equally isolated areas of Wyoming (west), Colorado (south) and South Dakota (north).

The eleven counties also constitute the Nebraska Health and Human Services Western Service Area, Region I Behavioral Health, Educational Services Unit #13, Region I Office of Human Development and the Area Office on Aging.

### ***Transportation Routes***

United States Interstate 80 slices through the extreme southern edge of the Panhandle, stretching from Big Springs (Deuel County) in the east, to Bushnell (Kimball County) on the far west edge of Nebraska. As a cross-county interstate, I-80 is a major thoroughfare for all sorts of traffic, including criminals and drugs.

In addition to the interstate, the Panhandle is served by a four-lane highway in the northern and southern parts of the Panhandle, along U.S. Hwy. 385. This major north-south highway spans the entire United States. It has been dubbed the Heartland Expressway in federal corridors and offers not only the usual travelers, but also criminals and drug runners, a straight shot from Mexico to Canada.

Other U.S. highways include 20, 26 and 30, east-west highways in the northern, central and southern Panhandle respectively. State highways include Nebr. Hwys. 2, 19, 27, 29, 71, 87, 88, 92 and 250. County roads are primarily maintained asphalt, dirt, gravel and rock roads serving local traffic, however there are some paved highways in the more populous counties, as well.

### ***Economy***

Panhandle residents are poorer than those living in other parts of Nebraska and the nation. Forty-one percent of area children live in poverty in single-parent homes; 58% of those in poverty in the region live in families with two parents. Nearly 14% of Panhandle residents have incomes at/or below the federally defined poverty level. One of the 11 counties has one of the nation's 10 lowest per capita personal incomes.

The area's economy relies primarily on railroads, agriculture and the surrounding agri-businesses. The ag economy has been very poor in the past several years, but has seen a recent upswing in the price of commodities. Agri-businesses employ many of the non-production people, in areas such as grain elevators, feedlots, etc. The small main street businesses in each community are much-reliant on the agri-business men and women to support their hometown stores.

In one community in the Panhandle, there are larger shopping and medical centers, drawing many people from throughout the region to shop and visit doctors there. Scottsbluff has been expanding in the retail and medical fields during the past year, but has still shown recent drops in population. Only Cheyenne County, headquarters for world's foremost outfitter, has shown an increase in population during the past five years.

The area is also well-served by two major national railroads, the Burlington-Northern Santa Fe Railway and the Union Pacific Railroad. The two railroads employ about 25% of the population in some communities, with many driving into the area to work on the railroad.

Here are some quick facts on the panhandle's workforce:

U.S. Census	Panhandle WIA (Q4)	Panhandle WIA (Avg:Selected + 3 Prior qtrs)
Total Employment	37,847	37,476
Net Job Flows	-181	238
Job Creation	2,019	2,182
New Hires	6,577	6,928
Separations	8,292	7,993
Turnover	10.50%	10.00%
Avg Monthly Earnings	\$2,742.00	\$2,583.25
Avg New Hire Earnings	\$1,752.00	\$1,691.75

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor

### Population

The Panhandle region is especially remote. There are 87,562 persons living in the 14,000 square miles area, down 2,848 individuals from the last report of 2005. The Panhandle region of Nebraska is bordered by equally-isolated areas of Wyoming (west), Colorado (south), and South Dakota (north).

Racial and ethnic minorities make up 16.2 % of the Panhandle residents. Overall, Hispanic Americans account for 12.16% of the area population. In Scotts Bluff County Hispanic Americans account for 252% of the population. The Panhandle has the largest population of Native Americans in Nebraska (2.7 % of the Panhandle). The predominantly Lakota people residing in four Panhandle counties (Box Butte 3.26%, Dawes 4.02%, Scotts Bluff 2.35% and Sheridan 10.99%) are not federally recognized within Nebraska.

According to U.S. Census figures from 2006, the youth (ages 0-19) of the Panhandle number 25,794 (29.5%), with 5,462 (6.2%) of an age less than four and 15,693 (1.79%) of an age less than 14. Voices for Children offers annual reports dealing with Nebraska children in their Kids Counts Reports. Below are some revealing statistics regarding the children in the Panhandle:

	% of minority	% under 5	% children	% poor		children with
	in poverty			2 parents	single parents	single parents
Banner	69	8	19	69	31	19
Box Butte	37	18	14	32	68	650
Cheyenne	31	15	12	43	57	544
Dawes	32	31	14	53	47	401
Deuel	29	13	12	58	42	77
Garden	52	22	22	74	26	86
Kimball	22	13	12	71	29	166
Morrill	36	24	20	73	27	226
Scotts Bluff	42	26	22	42	58	2,387
Sheridan	42	27	20	51	48	337
Sioux	0	12	24	74	26	45
Panhandle	35.6	19.0	17.4	58.2	41.7	448.9
State	27	14	12	40	60	88,431

Source: Kids County 2006 Report

	free/reduced	teen births 10-17	out of wedlock	low birth
	school lunches	1995-2004	births	weight 2004
Banner	45	1	9	0
Box Butte	587	53	474	13
Cheyenne	486	47	325	10
Dawes	359	24	260	7
Deuel	170	8	44	2
Garden	91	3	25	1
Kimball	148	15	118	6
Morrill	448	28	166	6
Scotts Bluff	2,197	321	1,953	49
Sheridan	345	29	238	5
Sioux	0	1	12	0
Panhandle	4,831	529	3,615	99
State	88,171	8,045	66,243	1,862

Source: Kids County 2006 Report

	graduates	dropouts	foster care	juvenile arrests
	2004-2005	2004-2005	2005	2005
Banner	17	*	0	3
Box Butte	169	*	20	163
Cheyenne	134	11	35	105
Dawes	184	43	14	62
Deuel	46	*	5	8
Garden	29	*	4	0
Kimball	44	*	23	1
Morrill	63	*	18	19
Scotts Bluff	420	53	226	478
Sheridan	80	*	8	76
Sioux	*	0	1	0
Panhandle	1,169	107	354	912
State	21,647	2,767	6,204	15,291

Source: Kids County 2006 Report



Other reports are available regarding our youth in records detailing problems with crime and underage drinking. Juvenile arrest/offense records show:

	<i>2005 arrests</i>	<i>2006 arrests</i>	<i>2007 arrests</i>	<i>2005 offenses</i>	<i>2006 offenses</i>	<i>2007 offenses</i>
<i>Banner</i>	3	2	1	0	0	0
<i>Box Butte</i>	163	200	180	196	100	105
<i>Cheyenne</i>	105	107	81	55	64	67
<i>Dawes</i>	62	41	18	62	104	84
<i>Deuel</i>	682	5	4	7	14	11
<i>Garden</i>	0	0	0	6	2	2
<i>Kimball</i>	1	1	2	36	26	17
<i>Morrill</i>	19	39	55	26	39	48
<i>Scotts Bluff</i>	478	583	581	290	294	494
<i>Sheridan</i>	76	30	38	32	62	63
<i>Sioux</i>	0	0	7	1	0	8
<b><i>Panhandle totals</i></b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>1,008</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>899</b>

*Source: Nebraska Crime Commission*

A biannual survey of area students regarding underage drinking show a dangerous pattern, as well:

	<i>Grade 6</i>		<i>Grade 8</i>		<i>Grade 10</i>		<i>Grade 12</i>	
	<i>Reg</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Reg</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Reg</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Reg</i>	<i>State</i>
<i>Alcohol use in their lifetime</i>	20.1	17.4	44.5	37.2	69.0	59.9	80.1	73.7
<i>Alcohol use in last 30 days</i>	3.1	2.1	11.9	10.3	35.7	27.1	45.6	41.8
<i>Binge drinking</i>	1.1	0.7	7.2	4.7	21.9	14.7	28.4	26.8
<i>Drunk or high at school</i>	0.7	0.7	4.4	4.0	14.0	10.0	16.2	14.1
<i>Got alcohol from a friend</i>	22.2	15.9	51.0	49.3	75.7	71.6	78.6	79.0
<i>Gave someone money to buy</i>	7.4	5.1	17.8	16.2	47.1	41.2	64.3	62.9
<i>Got it at a party/event</i>	3.7	6.0	10.5	12.2	22.9	23.1	32.2	32.0

*Source: 2007 Nebraska Risk & Protective Factor Student Survey, all number are percentages*

### *Education*

In the public school system, the Panhandle has 473 students in 15 preschools, 7,497 students in 22 K-6 schools, 2,211 students in 22 grade 7-8 schools and 4,680 students in 22 high schools for a total of 14,861 students. In addition, there are 480 students in private schools in the Panhandle and 327 students who are home-schooled.

The Pine Ridge Job Corps, a no-cost education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 through 24 get a better job, make more money, and take control of their lives is also located in the Panhandle, near Chadron. Their enrollment includes 224 students, all of whom are residents at the center.

They offer vocational training in union construction trades (carpentry, bricklaying and painting) and non-union trades such as business, warehouse and maintenance.

The Panhandle also has one state college and one community college. Chadron State College served 2,287 undergraduate students in the 2007-08 term, an increase from both previous years. Enrollment for the current school year has also increased. There were 439 grad students enrolled at CSC in 2007-08.

Western Nebraska Community College has campuses in Scottsbluff, Alliance and Sidney. With 4,083 students enrolled in the fall of 2008, the college offers more than 80 degree and certificate plans.

### *Historic and Natural Attractions*

The Panhandle is close to the Black Hills of South Dakota and boasts many historic and natural attractions: Chadron State Park, Lakes Minatare and McConaughy and Fort Robinson. Carhenge is another, not so natural, attraction that draws thousands from across the U.S. to the Panhandle each year.

## ***Identified Priority Areas and Strategies***

Based on statistical and anecdotal evidence, the community team has identified five priority areas: communications and networking, adequate staffing, prevention/treatment options, addressing oppression of minority (Native American and Hispanic) youth and policy development. The data listed above supports the choice of these priorities.

Communications and networking may include newsletters, e-mail listservs, sharing of resources, area wide judicial meetings and an area wide, county-by-county, resource directory.

Adequate staffing is a priority because the Panhandle needs to train existing staff, explore additional staffing opportunities for county attorneys' offices, additional probation, Office of Juvenile Services and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Service workers and other caseworkers, mentors and trackers. Other trainings used in the area that should be continued are Social Responsibility and Moral Recognizance Trainings, for law enforcement, education, health and human services and other professional who work with children.

The Panhandle Partnership's Training Academy is the natural avenue to coordinate training in each of these areas for all those involved in juvenile services in the Panhandle. The training academy regularly offers credit courses and non-credit workshops to health and human services workers in the Panhandle, maintaining an adequately trained staff and helping recruit new staff members.

Prevention and treatment options are a large area of need in the Panhandle. Parent education options are a big issue locally and regionally. Some suggest parent education be mandatory in issues of abuse or neglect and be offered as a prerequisite in other youth-serving programs that benefit parents.

Other issues to be addressed include ***problems with truancy***, youth support groups, the mentors and caseworkers described above, day treatment, intensive counseling, inpatient therapy, a common assessment tool, a better community support structure, a range of services that provide a continuum, like diversion, school resource officers and ***restorative justice***. There is a ***serious lack of detention space*** in the Panhandle, especially at local levels for short-term detention. Youth are often transferred to a regional center time after time, as they move through the juvenile justice systems.

After school programs are seen as an important part of the prevention programs in the Panhandle. Programs such as Boys & Girls Clubs, community youth centers and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community learning Centers have proved valuable tools to provide safe places for children to belong, offering a prevention tool to combat underage drinking, ***minors in possession and other alcohol issues*** such as binge drinking, drinking and driving. Prevention professionals also need to address a recidivism plan.

The working group has identified oppression of ***minority youth*** as a priority issue in the Panhandle. Native American and Hispanic youth are ***disproportionately contacted*** and represent an unduly large part of the youth in the judicial

system at all levels. Suggested strategies include training law enforcement and judicial staff on a diversity of culture issues, other professional training for health and human service workers, researching arrest records and trends, building community expectations, ***developing restorative justice programs***, offering cultural programs in the schools for all students, changing community norms, developing a holistic approach and completing a formal review.

Finally, in the area of policy development, the area needs to see an ongoing review and implementation of policies based on evidence-based and best/model practices.

## ***Strategies***

***The Panhandle Regional organizations have a practice that works well in nearly every area of prevention: Plan regionally, implement locally.*** This ability to put together regional plans and priorities, then develop local strategies has been used in developing programs for maternal-child health, substance abuse prevention, juvenile justice and others. To that end, the above plan was developed by the entire workgroup, followed by a strategy session in each county to make the decision which strategy would work best in that locale. The following strategies were identified:

Strategy	County involvement	Timeline	Resources needed	Expected results
After-school program	Box Butte County	January 2009-December 2011	Staff/volunteers, facility, supplies and equipment, daily and special activities, volunteers	Increase youth involvement with alternate activities in community, decrease juvenile delinquency, substance abuse
Youth scholarships and youth activities, including before, after and summer school programs	Cheyenne County			
Boys & Girls Club	Dawes County			
Diversion program	Scotts Bluff County		Personnel	Decrease juvenile delinquency, substance abuse
Theater camp	Sheridan County		Staff/volunteers, supplies and equipment and special activities	Increase youth involvement with alternate activities in community, decrease juvenile delinquency, substance abuse
Youth scholarships for college	Sioux County		Volunteer administrators and funding for scholarships	Students must commit to a drug, alcohol and tobacco-free life for all 4 years of high school

## 1. ***Appendix A***

### **PANHANDLE REGION**

**COUNTIES OF BANNER, BOX BUTTE, CHEYENNE, DAWES, DEUEL,  
GARDEN, KIMBALL, MORRILL, SCOTTS BLUFF, SHERIDAN, SIOUX**

### **JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM ANALYSIS TOOL**

### **(COMMUNITY PLANNING DECISION POINT ANALYSIS)**

The Juvenile Justice System Analysis Tool (Tool) was developed by the Juvenile Justice Institute at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in conjunction with the Nebraska Crime Commission to assist in County Juvenile Services Comprehensive Planning.

The Tool consists of twelve areas of decision points that make up the formal juvenile justice system in Nebraska. Various factors are present at each decision point—oftentimes changing from year to year based on state or county dynamics within the system such as changes in policies, programs, and/or personnel.

There are formal factors dictating certain decision points in the system, such as statutory authority. In addition, each county or community has unique factors surrounding certain decision points within the local county juvenile justice system. Identifying such informal factors helps to understand and assess juvenile justice needs and issues in individual locales.

Available data might also inform the factors surrounding a data point. Anecdotal data might be compared with statistical data, for example, to assess the true state of the system. County data is assessed when applying the Tool where applicable.

### **Panhandle Region**

A Panhandle Region Comprehensive Plan meeting/phone conference was held to provide input to the system analysis to ascertain changes that had taken place over the past three years. Those participating in the process from the Panhandle Region included local representatives from the Panhandle Partnership for Health and Human Services, the Panhandle Public Health District, Kids Plus, Family Rescue, the Center for Conflict Resolution, the public school system, Western Community Health Resources, Probation/Drug Court and a county/juvenile court judge.

Each of the twelve decision points were discussed as they relate to the juvenile justice system in the Panhandle Region.

The following analysis names the decision point and states any *noteworthy* issue identified or problem acknowledged at the particular stage, particularly since the last application of the Tool for the Panhandle Region. Not all decision points are commented on.

Juvenile court offense data for each county and for the Panhandle Region as a whole is provided for years 2005, 2006, and 2007 (Juvenile Court Reporting—Nebraska Crime Commission)<sup>1</sup>. Arrest numbers for each year represent arrests made of 0 – 17 year-olds. An assessment of the Panhandle Region data has been completed as part of applying the Tool. Such data is referenced throughout this report when necessary to fully analyze a certain decision point.

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#### **Juvenile Court Reporting (JCR)**

The Nebraska Crime Commission's Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) collects information from the courts on juveniles processed through the juvenile justice system. Approximately 8,000 juvenile cases a year receive final disposition or judgment which are reported to the Crime Commission by paper forms and by the computerized court system JUSTICE. Various statistics are compiled from these data by the SAC for use in juvenile justice planning. Data are provided back to local and state agencies, policy makers, the courts, [National Center for Juvenile Justice](#) and federal [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#).

#### **Nebraska Juvenile Court Data Set**

Juvenile court information has been submitted to the Crime Commission on an ongoing basis for over 20 years. When a case reaches a disposition, meaning finality with concern to the court proceedings, a data collection form is completed and forwarded to the Crime Commission. The reported information is collected within the county court or by the probation office. There data typically include cases which have been handled with a formal petition having been filed. The statistics reported here by the Crime Commission only contain information on cases handled through a formal petition. The terms, cases, petitions and referrals may all be used describe the same group of juveniles processed. This does not necessarily represent all cases filed in juvenile court during those times; rather only those that received final a disposition or judgment. Information on pending cases is not included.

**NEBRASKA JUVENILE COURT REPORT  
(Nebraska Crime Commission)**

**BANNER COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	3	2	1
<b>OFFENSES</b>	0	0	0

**BOX BUTTE COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	163	200	180
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
1st/2nd Degree Assault	1	0	0
3rd Degree Assault	6	6	5
Sexual Assault - 1st	2	1	0
Burglary	6	1	1
Drug - Felony	3	0	0
Arson - Felony	0	0	1
Theft > \$1500	1	0	1
Theft < \$1500	0	2	0
Theft < \$500	3	0	1
Theft < \$200	6	5	1
Crim Mischief - Misd	5	0	2
Major Trespass	0	2	4
Forgery - Felony	0	1	0
Weapon - Misd	0	1	1
Disturbing Peace	3	0	1
Other Felony	2	5	5
Other Misdemeanor	42	24	17
Truancy	4	3	2
Curfew	12	0	0
Ungovernable Behavior	5	3	7
Possession of Alcohol	48	30	36
Neglect	10	9	4
Dependent	2	1	3
Other/Unknown	25	6	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>105</b>

**CHEYENNE COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	105	107	81
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
1st/2nd Degree Assault	0	0	1
3rd Degree Assault	2	4	4
Burglary	0	1	0
Drug - Felony	0	0	1
Drug - Misdemeanor	1	0	0
Arson - Misdemeanor	0	1	0
Theft < \$1500	1	0	0
Theft < \$500	2	1	0
Theft < \$200	5	0	2
Crim Mischief - Felony	0	0	8
Crim Mischief - Misd	0	0	8
Major Trespass	0	0	2
Weapon - Misd	1	0	0
Other Felony	0	0	2
Other Misdemeanor	9	6	8
Truancy	4	0	3
Ungovernable Behavior	2	5	5
Possession of Alcohol	0	2	2
Other Status	0	1	1
Neglect	21	33	13
Dependent	1	5	3
Other/Unknown	6	5	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>67</b>

**DAWES COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	62	41	18
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
1st/2nd Degree Assault	0	1	0
3rd Degree Assault	6	6	9
Burglary	0	4	8
Drug - Felony	0	1	1
Drug - Misdemeanor	0	1	0
Theft > \$1500	2	1	0
Theft < \$1500	1	0	0
Theft < \$500	0	0	1
Theft < \$200	6	8	4
Crim Mischief - Felony	0	1	0
Crim Mischief - Misd	0	5	2
Major Trespass	3	3	3
Forgery - Misd - Major	0	1	0
Weapon - Misd	0	1	0
Disturbing Peace	2	4	10
Other Felony	0	0	3
Other Misdemeanor	10	9	13
Truancy	2	0	1
Ungovernable Behavior	2	3	1
Possession of Alcohol	8	30	13
Other Status	1	0	0
Neglect	8	13	6
Other/Unknown	11	12	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>84</b>



**DEUEL COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	8	5	4
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
3rd Degree Assault	0	1	1
Theft < \$500	0	2	0
Theft < \$200	0	1	0
Crim Mischief - Misd	1	0	0
Major Trespass	0	2	1
Other Misdemeanor	2	1	1
Truancy	0	1	0
Ungovernable Behavior	0	1	4
Possession of Alcohol	1	2	0
Neglect	0	1	4
Other/Unknown	3	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>

**GARDEN COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	0	0	0
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
Sexual Assault - 1st	1	0	0
Crim Mischief - Misd	2	0	0
Other Misdemeanor	1	0	0
Ungovernable Behavior	1	0	0
Possession of Alcohol	1	2	1
Neglect	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

**KIMBALL COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	1	1	2
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
1st/2nd Degree Assault	1	0	0
3rd Degree Assault	0	1	0
Burglary	1	0	0
Theft < \$500	1	0	0
Theft < \$200	1	1	1
Crim Mischief - Misd	6	3	0
Major Trespass	3	0	3
Weapon - Misd	1	0	0
Disturbing Peace	2	0	1
Other Misdemeanor	4	6	2
Curfew	0	1	0
Ungovernable Behavior	1	2	0
Possession of Alcohol	4	3	3
Neglect	8	3	5
Dependent	2	6	0
Other/Unknown	1	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>

**MORRILL COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	19	39	55
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
3rd Degree Assault	2	7	9
Sexual Assault - 1st	1	1	0
Burglary	1	0	0
Drug - Felony	1	0	0
Drug - Misdemeanor	1	0	2
Arson - Misdemeanor	0	0	1
Theft < \$200	0	5	3
Crim Mischief - Felony	1	0	0
Crim Mischief - Misd	1	1	1
Disturbing Peace	0	3	1
Other Felony	1	3	0
Other Misdemeanor	6	5	14
Ungovernable Behavior	1	0	1
Possession of Alcohol	1	7	8
Neglect	6	5	5
Dependent	0	2	0
Other/Unknown	3	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>48</b>

**SCOTT BLUFF COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	478	583	581
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
1st/2nd Degree Assault	2	1	1
3rd Degree Assault	29	24	42
Sexual Assault - 1st	3	0	1
Burglary	5	3	2
Drug - Felony	0	1	5
Drug - Misdemeanor	1	0	6
Arson - Felony	0	1	0
Arson - Misdemeanor	0	3	1
Theft > \$1500	2	2	2
Theft < \$1500	0	0	2
Theft < \$500	1	6	11
Theft < \$200	31	16	34
Crim Mischief - Felony	0	3	0
Crim Mischief - Misd	5	7	11
Major Trespass	0	6	4
Forgery - Felony	0	0	1
Forgery - Misd - Major	2	0	0
Weapon - Misd	0	0	3
Disturbing Peace	10	4	8
Other Felony	5	6	2
Other Misdemeanor	69	63	115
Truancy	18	14	41
Curfew	23	26	30
Ungovernable Behavior	12	9	21
Possession of Alcohol	11	25	38
Neglect	33	38	79
Dependent	4	9	5
Other/Unknown	24	27	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>494</b>

**SHERIDAN COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	76	30	38
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
3rd Degree Assault	2	7	6
Burglary	2	1	2
Drug - Felony	1	0	0
Drug - Misdemeanor	2	0	0
Arson - Misdemeanor	0	0	1
Theft < \$200	5	8	3
Crim Mischief - Felony	0	0	3
Crim Mischief - Misd	2	13	10
Major Trespass	3	2	1
Disturbing Peace	0	2	0
Other Felony	0	3	2
Other Misdemeanor	3	7	4
Ungovernable Behavior	0	0	1
Possession of Alcohol	8	11	21
Neglect	2	0	4
Dependent	0	8	2
Other/Unknown	2	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>63</b>

**SIOUX COUNTY**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	0	0	7
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
Possession of Alcohol	1	0	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>

**Pandhandle Counties****Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff,  
Sheridan, Sioux**

	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
<b>ARRESTS</b>	915	1008	967
<b>OFFENSES</b>			
1st/2nd Degree Assault	4	2	2
3rd Degree Assault	47	56	76
Sexual Assault - 1st	7	2	1
Burglary	15	10	13
Drug - Felony	5	2	7
Drug - Misdemeanor	5	1	8
Arson - Felony	0	1	1
Arson - Misdemeanor	0	4	3
Theft > \$1500	5	3	3
Theft < \$1500	2	2	2
Theft < \$500	7	9	13
Theft < \$200	54	44	48
Crim Mischief - Felony	1	4	11
Crim Mischief - Misd	22	29	34
Major Trespass	9	15	18
Forgery - Felony	0	1	1
Forgery - Misd - Major	2	1	0
Weapon - Misd	2	2	4
Disturbing Peace	17	13	21
Other Felony	8	17	14
Other Misdemeanor	146	121	174
Truancy	28	18	47
Curfew	35	27	30
Ungovernable Behavior	24	23	40
Possession of Alcohol	83	112	130
Other Status	1	1	1
Neglect	88	102	121
Dependent	9	31	13
Other/Unknown	75	52	63
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>899</b>

<u>Race</u>	White	Black	Native Am	Mexican Am	Other	Totals
<b>2005</b>	415	4	91	143	48	= 701
<b>2006</b>	406	10	93	124	72	= 705
<b>2007</b>	524	4	114	189	68	= 899

### **Panhandle Region Data**

When comparing the Panhandle Region data from 2005 through 2007 to statewide data during the same time period, one slight difference is with the percentage of minor in possession filings compared to other filings in the region. In 2005, minor in possession filings made up 11.84% of the total filings in the Panhandle Region compared to 8.38% statewide, in 2006—15.89% compared to 9.31% statewide, and in 2007—14.46% compared to 11.19% statewide. This could be for a number of reasons, including the differences between county attorney's offices choosing to file minor in possessions in adult court.

In addition to minor in possession, the other categories of most Juvenile Court filings for the Panhandle Region are third degree assault and neglect.



## **Decision Points:**

### **Arrest/Citation (Police/Law Enforcement)**

*Whether an information report should be filed, or what offense, if any, under which juvenile should be cited or arrested*

Notes:

The information report is consistently completed by law enforcement personnel.

There is concern that a disproportionate minority contact situation exists at the time of arrest. It is difficult to give any confirmation from arrest numbers based on the data available and the time given to complete this analysis.

*Whether to cite or arrest juvenile for juvenile or adult*

Notes:

A juvenile is usually cited as opposed to arrested due to the length of the process. If probation is involved and the officer does not like what the probation officer determined, there is an option for the decision to go to court and the judge will make the decision. This takes a fairly short turnaround—2-3 hours.

*Whether to take juvenile into custody or to cite and release*

### **Initial Detention (Probation)**

*Whether juvenile should be detained or released*

Notes:

The probation screening tool is the primary source of determination. Every attempt is made to not put the youth into detention prior to adjudication due to the barriers of cost and separation to family. Detention is more likely to happen after adjudication.

Detention is very expensive to counties in addition to transportation costs and staffing.

The overall opinion is that placement should be the least traumatic on the youth and that the need for detention should be weighed and balanced with any detrimental impact there might be on the youth's brain development.

### **Charge Juvenile (County Attorney)**

*Whether to prosecute juvenile*

*Whether youth should be prosecuted as juvenile or adult*

*Offense(s) for which juvenile should be charged*

Notes:

The elements of the crime determine what may be done by the county attorney.

There is interest that before a decision is made about prosecuting a juvenile, the school is contacted for things like attendance, discipline, and grades. This information would give the attorneys direction, help the judge make decision, and provide ideas for probation requirements. This could also apply during the pre-dispositional investigation stage.

#### **Pre-Adjudication Detention (Juvenile Court Judge)**

*Whether juvenile detained at the time of citation/arrest should continue in detention or out-of-home placement pending adjudication*

Notes:

This decision point is fact driven and case specific.

#### **Probable Cause Hearing (Juvenile Court Judge)**

*Whether State can show that probable cause exists that juvenile is within the jurisdiction of the court*

#### **Competency Evaluation (Juvenile Court Judge)**

*Whether juvenile is competent to participate in the proceedings*

*Whether juvenile is “responsible” for his/her acts*

Notes:

It is very unusual and extremely rare that the juvenile is found to be incompetent.

#### **Adjudication (Juvenile Court Judge)**

*Whether juvenile is, beyond a reasonable doubt, “a person described by §43-247”*

*Whether to order probation to conduct a pre-disposition investigation (PDI)*

*Whether to order OJS evaluation*

Notes:

OJS evaluations are ordered regularly due to the value of what is in each evaluation. Currently there is only one person coordinating the evaluations which is good for consistency.

***Whether to order a PDI and an OJS evaluation***

Notes:

Both a PDI and an OJS evaluation are rarely ordered at the same time as it is considered a duplication of services and a waste of resources.

**Disposition (Juvenile Court Judge)**

***Whether to place juvenile on probation***

***Whether to commit juvenile to the Office of Juvenile Services (OJS)***

***Whether to place juvenile on probation and commit juvenile to HHS or OJS***

Notes:

Of the choices, the court believes the most productive disposition at the present time in the Panhandle Region is Probation. This allows the juvenile to stay within the family unit. If a juvenile is committed to OJS, it is so they can be placed outside of the home, such as Boys Ranch.

There is a tracker service available in some, but not all, of the Panhandle Region. This program is used as a graduated sanction. Other programming available for juveniles is Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) and life skills programming.

**Administrative Sanctions (Probation)**

***Whether to impose administrative sanctions***

Notes:

There was opinion expressed that administrative sanctions are not seen as favorable due to the lack of input the judge has in decision making or the lack of record of the issues in front of the judge that could possibly be used at a later date in determining consequence.

**Motion to Revoke Probation (County Attorney)**

***Whether to file a motion to revoke probation***

Notes:

A motion to revoke probation does not happen to juveniles only on probation very often because they “age out” of the juvenile court system. A motion to revoke is more likely after the juvenile has had an OJS evaluation.

### **Modification/Revocation of Probation** (Juvenile Court Judge)

*Whether to modify or revoke probation*

### **Setting Aside Adjudication** (Juvenile Court Judge)

*Whether juvenile has satisfactorily completed his or her probation and supervision or the treatment program of his or her commitment*

*Whether juvenile should be discharged from custody and supervision of OJS*

Notes:

Setting aside an adjudication is used more for the 20+ year-olds. It is extremely rare to “Seal the Record” for juveniles as it is thought that this puts a permanent burden on the juvenile’s credibility.

## **Summary:**

Panhandle juvenile justice professionals and interested community members are a very committed group, working together to address the needs of youth in a very rural area of the state, utilizing resources as efficiently and effectively as possible, and collaborating on an ongoing basis to find local solutions for juvenile services in the panhandle community.

There has been much progress made in the Panhandle Region to improve juvenile justice services over the past three years. Many very positive changes and creative solutions continue to be implemented.

As a result of the conference call discussions had for the juvenile system analysis in addition to the Panhandle Region data that was examined, addressing the following issues may be considered in moving forward (in no particular order):<sup>2</sup>

### **1) Minor in Possession, Third Degree Assault, Neglect**

Of the juvenile court offenses that received dispositions over the past 3 years, the most common were minor in possession, third degree assault, and neglect. It may be beneficial to discuss why these particular offense occurrences are high in the Panhandle Region to determine how best to prevent such situations, specifically with alcohol-related cases.

### **2) Truancy**

Truancy remains an accurate predictor of future delinquency. Along with truancy comes the issue of school connectivity. If not being used already, such as the utilization of the YLS by Probation and OJS, the use of a standardized assessment instrument (YLS/CMI) could benefit school administrators and other juvenile justice professionals with the ability to evaluate a juvenile's situation before it got to the point of justice intervention. A community-wide focus on ensuring truancy is addressed early might be something the Panhandle Region continues to work on. As truancy and school connectivity are related, a community is tasked with the efforts to provide after school programs, mentoring, and other community service activities to youth.

School resource officers, with their effectiveness in dealing with issues of truancy and criminal behavior at the schools, need continual support. Because there may be more need for schools that do not have school resource officers, contemplating ways to employ school resource officers may be needed in the area.

In addition, communication between the schools and juvenile service providers and professionals is central to a seamless, collaborative juvenile system.

### **3) Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)**

The Panhandle Region's 2006 – 2008 Comprehensive Juvenile Services Plan listed Disproportionate Minority

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<sup>2</sup> This is not an exhaustive list of issues that may be considered to improve the juvenile justice system and services in the Panhandle Region, but rather a summary of items that may be of priority based on discussions had throughout the process.

Contact, or DMC, as a priority issue to be addressed. There was concern expressed that DMC continues to be an issue. Coordinating events or trainings to impact DMC and cultural based issues would be beneficial.

#### **4) HHS/OJS Underutilization**

It was expressed that HHS/OJS continues to be a very valuable resource, but is underutilized. It is understood that the high workloads within the system prevent participation in certain areas. HHS/OJS should play a more pivotal role in the community planning process and in other coalitions in the area.

#### **5) Options to Detention**

There continues to be a lack of detention options in the Panhandle Region. The logistics of transporting youth to Scotts Bluff or other detention facilities, as well as the financial burden is a challenge. A health facility, for example, might be contracted with, for certain overnight nonsecure probation screened juveniles.

#### **6) Multi-County Diversion Program**

Whether formal or informal, a multi-county diversion program for youth should be considered. Not every county in the Panhandle Region offers diversion. Collaborating on the development of a multi-county program would help youth and prevent them from entering the system, no matter their status.

#### **7) After School Programming**

After school programming provides a safe place for youth to be after school, keeping them out of trouble because they meet family needs by providing responsible adult supervision during nonschool hours. They also offer challenging and age-appropriate activities in a safe, structured, positive environment. In addition, such programming could provide mentoring, positive modeling, and prevention interventions. After school programming may be considered in certain areas of the Panhandle Region.

#### **8) Restorative Justice & Mediation**

There is concern in the Panhandle Region that there should be more of an emphasis on restorative justice throughout the juvenile justice system as well as the option for mediation—particularly as it relates to victim-offender mediation. The Center For Conflict Resolution in the area is a good resource to implement these types of interventions and program components.